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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 013559 TOSEC 010055
ORIGIN NODS-00

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:JWTWINAM:CEJ
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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
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INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T STATE 013559 TOSEC 010055

NODIS
FOR THE AMBASSADOR, JERUSALEM FOR ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV, JO, PLO, XF

SUBJECT: HUSSEIN'S COMMENTS ON SAUDI ARABIA

REF: AMMAN 432

1. WE ARE PUZZLED BY HUSSEIN'S COMMENTS PARA 6 REFTEL THAT SAUDIS AND OTHERS IN GULF WILL NOT SUPPORT HIM IN HIS DEFENSE NEEDS. WHILE BOTH JORDANIANS AND WE ARE AWARE OF CERTAIN PROCEDURAL DELAYS IN SAUDI PAYMENTS FOR JORDANIAN FMS PURCHASES, OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT SAUDIS WOULD CONSIDER THAT THEY HAVE BEEN QUITE GENEROUS IN MEETING JORDAN'S NEEDS AND THAT THEIR ASSISTANCE REFLECTS THEIR DESIRE TO SUPPORT HUSSEIN.

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2. WE ARE EVEN MORE PUZZLED BY HUSSEIN'S EXPRESSION OF CONCERN ABOUT THE UPSURGE OF RADICAL IDEAS IN SAUDI ARABIA AND THE FAILURE OF THE PRESENT LEADERS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH PROBLEMS. WHILE IT IS INEVITABLE THAT SAUDI SOCIETY WOULD BE EXPERIENCING CERTAIN GROWING PAINS, WE HAVE NOT NOTED ANY "UPSURGE OF RADICAL IDEAS" AND FROM OUR OWN VANTAGE POINT THE PROSPECTS FOR STABILITY SEEM EN-

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COURAGING. MOREOVER, OUR IMPRESSION IS THE PRESENT SAUDI LEADERSHIP IS MAKING A VERY GOOD EFFORT TO COME TO GRIPS WITH AN INCREASING AND TAXING ARRAY OF PROBLEMS IN MEETING

THE NEEDS OF SAUDI SOCIETY AND SAUDI ARABIA'S RESPONSIBILITIES ABROAD. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT SAUDI LEADERSHIP IS WRESTLING WITH COMPLEX CONCERNS ON MANY FRONTS, AND IS, OF COURSE, PARTICULARLY PRE-OCCUPIED WITH MIDDLE EAST PEACE ISSUE. POSSIBLY THIS EXPLAINS WHY SAUDI FOCUS ON JORDAN'S PROBLEMS IS NOT ALWAYS WHAT HUSSEIN WOULD WISH IT TO BE.

3. WE ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT HUSSEIN MAY BE TOYING WITH IDEA OF APPROACHING LIBYA FOR HELP AS A MEANS OF PRESSURING SAUDI ARABIA TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO HIS NEEDS. CERTAINLY HUSSEIN DOES NOT NEED OUR ADVICE ON HOW TO HANDLE OTHER ARABS, BUT WE COULD THINK OF NO WORSE TACK TO TAKE WITH SAUDIS THAN SEEKING LIBYAN SUPPORT.

4. SUGGEST YOU DRAW ON ABOVE AT NEXT OPPORTUNITY SO THAT HUSSEIN NOT COME TO FEEL THAT WE SHARE IN ANY WAY THE VIEWS EXPRESSED PARA 6 REFTEL. CHRISTOPHER

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